

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE

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ABSTRACT

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Current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are indicators that the Army will be required to conduct counter-insurgency, stability, and reconstruction operations for the foreseeable future. National Security Presidential Directive-44 and Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, both issued in December 2005, recognize the importance and issue guidance for improving the U.S. Government's ability to prosecute security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations as a joint interagency team. In light of these directives and current realities, how can we best implement them to accomplish our strategic objectives? How can the intent of these directives most effectively be implemented at the operational and tactical level, where the roots of strategic success are planted, in the short and long term? The multi-national and interagency nature of these operations requires careful review of the organizational structure, training, and command relationships to achieve a coordinated effort. The Army's individual, leader, and collective training must prepare soldiers, leaders, and units to operate effectively as small units in a decentralized environment.

THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE

Our nation is in the midst of what can be best described as a grand counter-insurgency to defeat a Militant Islamic Extremist movement whose goal is the establishment of a global theocracy based on Islamic Law.¹ This is a struggle in which we will be engaged for many years to come and is now known as the Long War.² Coalition operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are only the beginning of this struggle. The Department of Defense (DOD), and the Army specifically, must embrace, and if necessary, lead the combined and interagency effort during the conduct of counter-insurgency and reconstruction operations. This process, when effective, enables us to create a convergence of effects that aid in the achievement of our strategic objectives.

The enemy of the United States and much of the developed world is not terrorism—terrorism is but one method of attack. The enemy is Militant Islamic Extremists, most notably associated with Al Qaeda, but also linked to other groups with similar goals worldwide. The goal of their Grand Insurgency is the establishment of theocratic global order based on *their* interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, based on the Koran. The goal of the United States and its allies must be the defeat of this grand insurgency, which is really a war of ideas. Therefore, our combined and national efforts need to evolve from a murky global war on terror to a more focused approach to the defeat of a determined, capable, and sophisticated insurgent movement. A focused joint interagency approach allows us to better pick our spots and allocate resources that are already spread thinly due to extensive ongoing commitments. Weak and failing nation-states, or what Thomas Barnett describes as “gap” countries³ are prime breeding grounds for Militant Islamic Extremism and will continue to demand the priority of our efforts. Failing states and those emerging from conflict will be a problem that the United States and its allies will be required to address for the foreseeable future.⁴ Further, counter-insurgency operations will occur much more frequently than major land wars and rapid conventional campaigns that were the core of the Army’s transformation concept.⁵

The goal of the United States and its allies with regard to failed states should be effective governance which provides for the security, social and economic welfare of its citizens—an environment that is not conducive to the growth or perpetuation of Militant Islamic Extremism. This goal can be accomplished only through skillful application of all the elements of national power in a joint, interagency, and collaborative process.

The Problem Defined

The Army and the United States Military conduct combat operations very well as illustrated by our successful military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our ability to skillfully apply military power is unmatched. An equal challenge is the skillful application of economic, diplomatic, and informational means that must be integrated into an effective counter-insurgency strategy. How do we best get public infrastructure, civil administration, law enforcement, military, and financial institutions of failed or war torn states to a functional level? How do we achieve a “new normal,” or the desired end state as outlined by our political objectives that can withstand the pressures of insurgency?⁶ The Army has chosen to call these activities stability and reconstruction operations; Joint Forces Command has named them Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations; The Center for Strategic and International Studies Bi-Partisan Commission described these activities as post –conflict reconstruction.⁷ Going back to the premise that our nation is involved in a global counter-insurgency campaign, then all of these activities (reconstruction, stability, security, and transition) can be viewed as components of the counter-insurgency. The term counter-insurgency, or COIN, denotes a use of all the instruments of national power (diplomatic, information, military, and economic) to achieve strategic objectives.

Achievement of our strategic objectives is best done through joint interagency planning, coordination, and execution, which includes our allies and non-governmental organizations. By their nature, counter-insurgency operations must be “inter-everything” if they are to be successful. “This (joint force) concept refers to joint, multi-agency, and multinational force and includes the integration and appropriate balance of conventional and special operations forces.”⁸ This definition leaves out non-governmental and private voluntary organizations which must also be part of a joint effort with a shared purpose. They are a reality in both Afghanistan and Iraq and must be an integrated part of the joint operation. All of these agencies and international institutions are coming from different parts of the globe to help. They bring much needed resources, expertise, and energy, but they also bring very different assumptions, working styles, and goals.⁹

There are several reasons why joint, collaborative operations with a shared objective are critical to the success of ongoing and future counter-insurgency operations: (1) situational awareness, (2) inefficient use of scarce resources, (3) sending mixed signals to the host nation political leadership and population, and (4) the chance that a dysfunctional and discordant joint process can impede or reverse gains made. This is particularly true with operations on the ground and needs to be addressed in the planning phases at the National Security Council

(NSC) and combatant commands to ensure that appropriate agencies are in place working collaboratively, which is critical to the success our Long War campaign. A particular challenge is the ability of other agencies in the government to resource these operations, particularly with qualified professionals to work in concert with the joint military force in the counter-insurgency. This is particularly true with the reconstruction efforts associated with the counter-insurgency. "Post conflict reconstruction must be approached as an intrinsic rather than an optional part of winning the war."¹⁰ The NSC and our combatant commands have the requisite depth and expertise from outside the DOD to contribute to joint interagency coordination groups (JIACGs). The problem lies in implementation on the ground -- in the provinces and districts, where there is an absence of joint interagency cooperation. Agencies outside the DOD do not have the depth required to put qualified professionals in the field. In this case, the military commander is the focal point for all aspects of the counter-insurgency by default.

Situational awareness is critical in any counter-insurgency operation and a working joint partnership greatly aids in the achievement of this. Particularly critical to gaining situational awareness are host nation government officials and non-governmental organizations working in the joint battle space. They are much more likely to have an intimate knowledge of the terrain, the population, political landscape, critical infrastructure needs, and where the enemy may be operating. Other joint forces, such as special operations forces, must also be integrated into the joint team. For example, in Afghanistan, it was not unusual for an infantry commander to work in the same battle space with special operations forces. Because no formal command relationship existed, it made cooperation for the purpose of gaining situational awareness the purview of the commanders on the ground. Most times, this worked well, but there were other situations, where no structured joint inter-agency process existed and information that would have enhanced situational awareness of the entire joint team was not shared; sometimes, as a matter of omission and sometimes as a matter of commission. This lack of joint interagency situational awareness resulted in missed tactical opportunities, redundancy of effort, and ill-advised distribution of resources.¹¹

The demand for all types of resources in COIN operations is vast. Resources, whether they are people, time, money, or most importantly, lives, are much more likely to be squandered in the absence of a joint interagency planning, coordination, and execution framework. As it stands today, donor nation contributions to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan are only a fraction of what has been pledged, and with ongoing operations in Iraq and other domestic and international concerns, are unlikely to be increased.¹² This makes joint decision-making and

application of scarce resources critical to counter-insurgency success. Despite the best intentions, resources are likely to be wasted without joint collaboration.

Take the example, of coalition forces in concert with the leadership of a district, endeavoring to build a grade school. This makes sense on the surface because no school exists; education is important to the future of the country; and it is a concrete way to influence the population toward the government. Unfortunately, the school is not part of the government's plan for near term school construction, and hence teachers, their salaries and the operating budget for the school are not a priority for the provincial government. Also, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations mission in the country have worked very closely with the host nation government in the development of a comprehensive education plan, but since no habitual joint relationship exists, coalition forces are unaware of these plans. The civil military affairs officer of the coalition staff, who may or may not be a civil affairs officer by military occupational specialty (MOS), secures the funding and accepts a bid from a local contractor to build the school. Unknown to the civil military affairs officer, the contractor is not qualified and does not have the expertise or equipment to build the school to an acceptable structural standard. A reliable contractor database is readily available from both local NGOs and USAID, but never checked before hiring the contractor. The result: an unfinished school, wasted resources, and a frustrated population that views the government, even though they were really never brought into the process, as being unable to provide for their basic needs.¹³

Without a joint interagency structure in place on the ground, the divergent efforts of a diverse set of actors in the counter-insurgency have the strong potential to send mixed messages to the political leadership and the populace. This is true at all levels but particularly to operations on the ground, where a variety of local governmental institutions, agencies, coalition and combined forces, international institutions, and NGOs are working in the same geographic battle space. Without a unity of goals and effort, we present a weak, fragmented image of the government we are trying to stabilize and support. If the goal is effective governmental institutions which can provide for the security and welfare of its population independently, then the political messages, information campaign, military operations, development priorities, and intelligence sharing must be joint interagency, with the host nation government intricately involved and in the lead. The goal is to put a "host nation face" on the joint counter-insurgency effort.

Perhaps the most dangerous result of a counter-insurgency fought in a parallel rather than in a joint interagency process is the potential to actually impede, create negative effects, or

reverse progress to the achievement of strategic objectives. Over-reliance on military power, ill-conceived and fragmented development strategies, and inconsistency in information operations are likely to provide well organized and coherent insurgent movements with opportunities to gain tactical and strategic advantage. The host nation government, in cooperation with an NGO, is able to get a power plant up and running, but has not shared this information or developed a security plan with military forces operating in the area for protection of the plant. Two days later the plant is attacked and disabled by insurgent forces.¹⁴ This fuels the perception on the part of the population that the government cannot sustain or protect their basic needs. Lack of joint cooperation can serve to undermine the government and strengthen the insurgency—a sense of hopelessness is created.

Ongoing counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are *variants of models* for what we as a nation and our allies will be required to conduct if we are to prevail in the larger counter-insurgency against Militant Islamic Extremism. A cookie cutter approach will not be successful. Past experience and lessons learned should serve instructive, not prescriptive roles in our operational plans. There are two aspects of counter-insurgency and reconstruction operations that are likely to be common threads in future operations. First, they will occur in failed or weak states with severely impaired political, social, and public infrastructure where the application of military power alone will not achieve our strategic objectives, and if applied improperly can worsen the situation. Sean Maloney, in a recent article on the progress in Afghanistan, asserts “that subtlety and thought be employed rather than brute force. Brute force solutions will not work in Afghanistan.”¹⁵ Secondly, the reconstruction process should begin in the shaping phase and must be executed, if necessary, concurrent with combat operations. None of the activities associated with counter-insurgency have a clear beginning or end, and this period encompasses peacetime through the successful attainment of our strategic objectives.¹⁶ A coordinated joint interagency effort, bringing to bear all the elements of national and international power, is required from beginning to end.

The importance of getting the interagency process right is not confined to our current counter-insurgency campaign against militant Islamic extremism. The economic security of developed nation-states is jeopardized by conflict in weak or failed nation-states. The growing inter-dependency of the world economy will make conflict a potentially more costly enterprise in terms of the economic impact it will have on many countries on the periphery of conflict and the impact on their economic systems. This will continue to grow in importance with the rapid pace of globalization and the flattening of the world.¹⁷ Failed states not only serve as potential

breeding grounds for the global Islamic extremists but also as destabilizing influences on the global economic system.

The collaborative joint interagency process must begin early if it is to be effective on the ground. Parallel, stovepipe efforts are counter-productive. Cooperation, planning, and coordination should take place prior to the initiation of hostilities. The joint military force plays a supporting role in activities, such as Theatre Security Cooperation Programs and other shaping activities, in concert with the Department of State (DOS), with the goal of preventing hostilities, and if they do occur, setting the conditions for successful combat operations.¹⁸

Current U.S. Policy

On 7 December 2005 President Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44: Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization. First, following the recommendations outlined in numerous studies on the issue of reconstruction and stability operations, NSPD-44 designates that “the Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.”¹⁹ NSPD-44 also directs the Department of State to develop the doctrine and implementing procedures for stability and reconstruction and to integrate them into military plans and doctrine “where appropriate.”²⁰ The directive puts the Department of State (DOS) squarely in the lead for the planning, coordination, execution, procedures, and doctrine associated with reconstruction and stability operations. Significantly, the DOS is directed to identify weak or failed states as focal points for U.S. Government efforts during the pre-hostilities, engagement, or the shaping phase of an operation.²¹

The second significant aspect of NSPD-44 is that it directs the DOS to “develop a strong civilian response capability including necessary surge capabilities; analyze, formulate, and recommend additional authorities, mechanisms, and resources needed to ensure that the United States has the civilian reserve and response capabilities necessary for stabilization and reconstruction activities to respond quickly and effectively.”²² It also directs other government agencies to develop similar capabilities as required. The Directive does not include a timeline or milestones for the completion of these actions. It appears that the implementing details of the

Directive such as timelines and specific requirements will be refined by the newly formed Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

Third, NSPD-44 attempts to delineate who is in the lead during an ongoing stability and reconstruction operations; it directs that "in order to maintain clear accountability and responsibility for any contingency response or stabilization and reconstruction mission, lead and supporting responsibilities for agencies and departments will be designated using the mechanism outlined in NSPD-1. These lead and supporting relationships will be redesignated as transitions are required."²³ In reviewing NSPD-1, the Organization of the National Security Council System does not refer to any such mechanism for the designation of lead and supporting agencies. One could surmise from study of NSPD-1 that the responsibility to recommend designation of lead and supporting relationships would lie with the Stabilization and Reconstruction Policy Coordination Committee (PCC). Their recommendation would be forwarded for review and/or approval as required by the deputies and principals committees of the National Security Council with the final decision making authority resting with the President, unless he delegates the decision to a lower level.²⁴ There is no clear delineation to sort this out. The issue is further muddled by stating that, "This Directive is not intended to, and does not affect the authority of the Secretary of Defense or the command relationships established for the Armed Forces of the United States."²⁵

Fourth, NSPD-44 directs the Secretary of State's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to develop models for packages of technical experts who may be required in addition to the diplomatic first response capability of the DOS.²⁶ These technical experts could be engineers, law enforcement, agricultural, or any capability that lies outside the means of the U.S. Government.

Analysis of U.S. Policy

Within the Executive Branch, NSPD-44 takes the positive step of establishing a Policy Coordination Committee (PCC) for Stabilization and Reconstruction. This PCC will serve as a useful forcing mechanism to bring all the relevant agencies together, from within and outside the government, to set priorities and provide strategic direction, and oversee implementation. However, NSPD-44 does very little to establish clear responsibilities for the *execution* of stability and reconstruction operations. Lead and supporting roles between DOS and DOD for execution are situation dependent and remain linked to the security situation and the intensity of conflict. It is also unclear in the Directive of how the DOS would lead an operation, regardless of the security situation, in which the military is actively participating. NSPD-44 gives the DOS

authority and responsibility for all aspects of stabilization and reconstruction without the means to exercise it. The military currently assumes the bulk of the burden for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan because of the absence of trained personnel, or *any personnel*, from other sectors of the U.S. Government. The emphasis on the development of enhanced civilian capacity is long overdue, but will take time, measured in years, not months, to develop and expand the enhanced capability that can make a significant difference on the ground. Contractors may be a short term solution to rapidly enhancing civilian capability. The long term direction of NSPD-44 is positive and clearly signals the importance the political leadership places on maximizing the nation's capability to effectively conduct stability and reconstruction operations.

Department of Defense Policy

Department of Defense Directive 3000.05; Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations published on 28 November 2005 outlines several policy initiatives and assigns responsibilities for the conduct of SSTR within the DOD. The first major policy initiative in the directive is the designation of stability operations as a core mission for the DOD. It directs that stability operations be given "comparable" weight to combat operations and be included in the training, budgeting, manning, equipment, and education strategies of all the services.²⁷

Second, DOD Directive 3000.05 instructs that U.S. military forces be prepared to take the lead and conduct stability and reconstruction operations in the absence of civilian capabilities on the ground. These activities include the restoration of order, rebuilding of indigenous institutions, and enabling private sector revitalization.²⁸ As a component of these activities, contingencies for the execution of SSTR are to be integrated into all phases of all operational plans. This appears to be a clear effort to avoid a repeat of a perceived failure on the part of military planners to adequately plan for the insurgencies, and the accompanying stabilization and reconstruction requirements in Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, the Directive mandates the inclusion of all available expertise, both from within, and outside the U.S. Government, to include NGOs, in the planning of SSTR operations. Again this is radical departure from the planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom, where James Fallows asserts that "a vast amount of expert planning [on the stability and reconstruction phases] was willfully ignored by the people in charge [the DOD leadership]."²⁹

Third, DOD 3000.05 directs the integration of stability operations into professional military education; this includes attendance to civilian education and private sector institutions, cross-agency assignments, and immersion into foreign cultures.³⁰ To further enhance capability in

critical military occupational specialties, the Directive instructs the services to develop both the sufficient quantity and quality of Foreign Area Officers, psychological operations, civil affairs, military police, and engineer personnel and equipment to successfully prosecute stability and reconstruction operations.

Fourth, it directs the Combatant Commanders to designate a Joint Force Coordinating Authority for Stability Operations to ensure that stability operations are integrated into training and that “all relevant assets are harnessed.” Combatant Commanders are also directed to submit all ideas and concepts to the Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) for consideration. Joint Forces Command is given the responsibility to develop the doctrine for SSTR.³¹

Analysis of DOD policy

The designation of stability operations as a core mission for DOD is a positive, although belated, step in the right direction. The failure of the Directive to designate an executive agent for SSTR is disappointing. The Army or the Marines would have been a logical choice, given their wealth of recent experience and that these two services can be expected to carry the majority of the burden for the foreseeable future as the DOS and other departments and agencies continue to develop their civilian capabilities. Another positive aspect of the directive is the fact that the DOD is saying to the military leadership and acknowledging in policy that in the absence of civilian capability to plan and execute SSTR, we must do it. The Directive in essence says that we (DOD) cannot do it alone. We must bring anyone that has relevant capabilities to the team. Waiting until we are in the midst of an operation to figure it out is not the right answer. More importantly, by institutionalizing SSTR, the DOD gives legitimacy to the efforts and initiatives that our commanders on the ground in the provinces and districts of Iraq and Afghanistan are pursuing on a daily basis. Hopefully, this legitimacy will translate into the allocation of resources to our SSTR efforts as we enter the next budget cycle. Those in the field recognized the need and acted upon it long before the Directive was published.

DOD Directive 3000.05 instructs geographic combatant commanders to “identify stability operations requirements,” but should have gone farther in instructing the CCDRs to tie their theater security cooperation plans, at the strategic direction of the DOS, to those countries where U.S. SSTR operations would have the highest potential payoff.³² The directive is by no means a “how to” framework. Much like NSPD-44, it will take time to implement and has limited relevance to our forces on the ground today. Commanders on the ground are still left to figure it out for themselves, albeit with added emphasis from the DOD leadership. It is strange that the Directive was not signed by the Secretary of Defense, but rather by the acting Undersecretary of

Defense. The Defense Science Board's report on Institutionalizing Stability Operations within the Department of Defense identifies the Secretary of Defense as "the most important agent of change" and that his "expressed and perceived attitude.... is a key factor" in transforming DOD's culture and capabilities regarding stability operations.³³

In addition to NSPD-44 and DOD Directive 3000.05, many authors, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations have published studies which focus on the United States' capability to conduct stability and reconstruction. The majority of these studies are focused at the national level, with a few making broad references to initiatives at the brigade combat team (BCT) level, but with no specificity on the prosecution of SSTR or the composition of the joint interagency contingent on the ground. This broad top-down approach fails to get at the heart of the immediate task at hand. Our ability to defeat an insurgency or achieve stability is most affected by what happens on the ground, in concert with coalition partners, the international community, and the host nation government.³⁴ We can have all the good structures and policies in place at the national and combatant command level we want, but the battles are fought, schools are built, government infrastructure enabled, and governments gain credibility from the ground up. It does not really matter much to the average Afghan or Iraqi that we have developed a post for the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization. It has minimal impact on their lives, and without extended reach will not make their lives any better in the long term. They want to see results that positively impact their daily lives. That does not happen if the extent of our interagency reach only extends as far as to Washington, Qatar, or even Kabul and Baghdad, for that matter. It comes from empowering and providing adequate resources to those operating in the field.³⁵ Our reach must extend into the provinces and districts.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The Department of Defense must remain the lead agency for executing a U.S stability, security, transition, and reconstruction policy that will take significant time to expand and develop as mandated by NSPD-44. The civilian capability to execute the policy outlined in NSPD-44 does not currently exist. The work started at the strategic level to move us in the right direction but it not ready to be implemented for use in current operations. This is a situation that will hopefully improve rapidly, but is likely to exist for a period of years. Implementation of NSPD-44 will take time in terms of developing a planning and coordination capability, and recruiting field officers with the requisite experience, expertise, and dedication to be valuable in the field. This is not necessarily a negative situation. Who has better knowledge of the security, political, cultural, tribal, and economic situation better than military units which interact with the

populace and its local leadership on a daily basis? Are we saying that the typical battalion level commander, with 20 years experience, which typically includes multiple experiences in combat, counter-insurgency, and stability operations does not have the requisite skills to interact with government leaders, aid them in the establishment of priorities, or understand the importance of strong civil institutions? Are we really better off handing the responsibility for stabilizing a province or district to a well meaning, but inexperienced diplomat from the Department of State? Until enough depth and experience can be built in the other members of the inter-agency, the military must retain the lead role in the operational theater. The DOD, and the Army and Marine Corps in particular, is growing a group of young leaders who understand from their experiences in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq that COIN and SSTR operations are complex and the attainment of our objectives go well beyond the application of military force. The culture and mindset of our military is rapidly adapting to the current demands of SSTR. Counter-insurgency, not large scale ground combat, will likely be DOD's primary means of employment for the foreseeable future.

Second, interagency teams should be built at the brigade combat team level, and lower, if possible. There is need for various agencies to be represented as required. The Department of State should be represented by a field officer from the United States Agency for International Development, who has a working knowledge of the developmental issues in the area of operations and is familiar with the non-governmental organizations active in the area of operations. Expertise from the Department of Justice is required to aid in the organization, structure, and training of civilian law enforcement. The intelligence community, whether it is CIA or DIA, should be represented if they are active in the BCT commander's battle space. Representation from the Departments of Treasury and Agriculture are included as required. This team should form during the planning phase of the operation and remain together through execution. In the case of an ongoing operation, rotations of the interagency staff should occur so that there is an acceptable level of continuity in terms of local knowledge, relationships with governmental officials and civilian leaders.³⁶ This is not a new recommendation, as other studies of post-conflict, stability, and reconstruction such as the Council on Foreign Relations 2005 Report and Defense Science Board's 2004 report have already highlighted, however it is more detailed in terms of how to achieve this at the critically important BCT level.

Third, commanders, particularly at the brigade and battalion level, must be armed with the knowledge of how to tap into development resources and be part of the implementation process of reconstruction. This can be accomplished through dedicated training at home station and during pre-deployment site surveys prior to deployment. They need the expertise to know how

to get a school, road, or bridge built in concert with a development strategy driven by the host nation government. Military leaders must be equipped with the skill sets and resources to enable them to move the reconstruction process forward; to make steady progress. In his analysis of post-war occupations in Germany, Japan, and Afghanistan, and their application to Iraq, Salvatore Jennings stresses the importance of steady progression.

The impression (upon the population) that progress is being made is important. Nation building is not only a physical process but a psychological one. Maintaining modest momentum in post-war reconstruction and ensuring that the Afghans (or Iraqis) take part in the process...will be fundamental to success in the coming years.³⁷

Until our civilian capabilities are sufficiently bolstered, the military must be enabled to effectively assist in the attainment of steady progress.

Fourth, institutionalize the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept into joint SSTR and COIN doctrine and get them inserted into operations early. In Afghanistan, and recently in Iraq, PRTs have been established to aid in the process of maintaining momentum and focus on reconstruction. These teams have been typically led by a lieutenant colonel who is a civil affairs specialist. They typically consist of 5-10 civil affairs soldiers and ideally, representation from the USAID, USDA, and the provincial government which they are tasked to assist. Dependent on the security situation, the PRT is also augmented with a security element of 50-100 soldiers. Their mission is to extend the authority of the government, enhance security, and facilitate humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts.³⁸ The first PRT in Afghanistan was established in January 2003, 16 months after the initiation of Operation Enduring Freedom.³⁹ In future operations, PRTs should be built into the planning process and be integrated into SSTR at the onset of operations. They must be prepared to work in the midst of a counter-insurgency. We cannot wait for the “stabilize” and “enable civil authority” phases of an operation to bring in expertise from other agencies of the government.⁴⁰ While security may be lacking in one district which clearly precludes rebuilding, opportunities are likely to exist elsewhere. Missing opportunities to move the reconstruction process forward because of inadequate expertise, focus, understanding, or staffing hinders the SSTR effort. Missed opportunities add support to the insurgency, something that must be avoided.

PRTs must be staffed properly and command relationships established to ensure that unity of effort is achieved throughout a given province or region. This is vital in the face of ongoing insurgencies, such as are occurring in Iraq and Afghanistan. The PRT is a component in the overall counter-insurgency strategy. The best solution is for the PRTs to work directly for a brigade combat team (BCT) commander. In some cases it makes sense for the PRT to work

at the direction of battalion task force commander. It is dependent on the situation on the ground, capabilities of commanders, and their knowledge of the battlespace. The ultimate goal regardless of the command relationships is unity of effort and unity of effects. The PRTs should be staffed with representation from the DOS, DOJ, USDA, local government, and other capabilities as the situation dictates.

Fifth, make tour lengths of interagency representatives commensurate with their DOD counterparts. Counter-insurgencies and stability operations and the human dynamic are inextricably linked. Inserting a DOS representative into a complex stability operation and expecting them to immediately operate effectively is unrealistic. Experience in Afghanistan proved that it took around three months of operations in the Zabol Province before one had a working understanding of the dynamics of the area of operations—political, economic, geographic, cultural—and that at the one year mark, one was still continuing to learn.⁴¹ There is a process of relation-building that must occur to operate effectively. Thus, tour lengths for interagency representatives should mirror those of our military. The current 4-6 month rotation is not long enough to develop the level of expertise and the depth of relationships required to conduct successful counter-insurgency and stability operations.

Sixth, we must intensify our efforts to work with the community of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and ensure that we are attempting to achieve the same shared sense of purpose as we have in our recent directives. The challenge here is that many NGOs believe that they cannot allow themselves to be associated with a belligerent or occupying force out of concern that they will forfeit their “humanitarian space” in which they perceive they can operate with relative security.⁴² Another, more accurate perspective may be that aid, a reconstruction project, or action which would lend credibility to indigenous governmental institutions are perceived as hostile acts and compromise the security of NGOs, regardless of their affiliation with a military force.⁴³ Inroads can be made in this arena by soliciting NGOs for advice and assistance in the planning process of SSTR operations, inclusion into mission rehearsal exercises prior to deployment, and most importantly, ready access to information and capabilities that military forces possess uniquely. These include intelligence, aviation support, and inclusion in a development and counter-insurgency strategy. It is the military's responsibility to “sell” the legitimacy of their intentions and goals with NGOs, whose ultimate goals are likely to be complementary.

Seventh, include stability and reconstruction into all officer education and senior non-commissioned officer training. This would start with second lieutenants at the basic officer courses. They are the leaders who will execute, and ultimately, make or break the success of a

SSTR operation. These tasks would be trained in addition to, and not in lieu of, core war fighting skills. This would be best accomplished by a designated mobile training team composed of military, USG, and NGOs with recent experience in the field. Leader training curriculums should also focus on the role of soldier-diplomat. Junior military leaders at the tactical level, who engage the civilian populace and leadership on a regular basis, must have a working knowledge of civil-military operations. Even though the DOD will increase the quantity of high demand military occupational specialties (civil affairs, psychological operations, military police, and engineers), there is still likely to be a shortage. As with developing civilian capacity, it will take time to grow this increased capability through recruitment, training, and most importantly, practical experience in the field. General purpose forces have the ability to do many of the same tasks required of our civil affairs, military police, and psychological operations specialists. They are doing this now. It is a matter of mindset, training, and experience.

Our nation is engaged in a grand counter-insurgency for the long term. Some have predicted this fight could last for 20-50 years. It will require the stamina and determination of the American people and free peoples throughout the world. We can only achieve this when all the elements of national and international power are working together toward a common goal. There will be invariable friction points and stumbling blocks along the way. There is no recipe for success, but the ingredients in the cookbook need to be comprehensive and include everything we have on the shelf. The achievement of an effective joint inter-agency process is essential if we are to be successful.

Endnotes

¹ This description was taken from command guidance issued to me by Colonel Richard Pedersen, U.S. Army. He served as the Commander of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and is currently the Commander of the Battle Command Training Program, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He used this description to frame our operational objectives prior to the Brigade Combat Team's deployment to Afghanistan in April 2004. I found it useful as an overarching framework from which to develop objectives for the battalion task force I commanded.

² United States Department of Defense, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, 6 February 2006, available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/dod/qdr-2006-report.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 February 2006.

³ Thomas P.M. Barnett, "The Pentagon's New Map", published in Esquire Magazine, March, 2003, available from <http://www.thomaspmbarnett.com/published/pentagonsnewmap.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2005.

⁴ Samuel R. Berger and Brent Scowcroft, "In the Wake of War: Improving U.S. Post Conflict Capabilities," *Council on Foreign Relations, Independent Task Force Report No. 55*, July 2005. pg 4.

⁵ Lynn E. Davis and Jeremy Shapiro eds., *The U.S. Army and the New National Security Strategy*, (Arlington, VA, Rand Arroyo Center, 2003), 57.

⁶ Department of Defense, *Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept, Version 1.06*, 8 June 2004, available from www.dtic.mil/jointvision/draftstabjoc.doc; Internet; accessed on 21 November 2005.

⁷ Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the United States Army, *Play to Win, Final Report of the bi-partisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, January 2003, available from <http://www.csis.org>; Internet; accessed on 17 November 2005.

⁸ Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept, version 1.06.

⁹ Play to Win, pg. 7.

¹⁰ Clark A. Murdock, et al, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols- Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report*, (Washington, D.C., Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004), 67.

¹¹ This observation is based on my experience as an infantry battalion task force commander in Afghanistan and with conversations with peer commanders in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

¹² Working for Results in Afghanistan, November 2005, linked from the World Bank Homepage at "Regional Areas," available from <http://web.worldbank.org/wbsite/external/countries/southasiaext/afghanistanext/n/o,menu.pk.html>; Internet; accessed 28 November 2005.

¹³ Based on personal observation in Afghanistan.

¹⁴ Based on personal experience in Afghanistan.

¹⁵ Sean M. Maloney, "Afghanistan Four Years On: An Assessment," *Parameters* 35, (Autumn 2005): 26.

¹⁶ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, *Defense Science Board 2004 Summer Study, Transition to and From Hostilities*, December 2004 Available from http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2004-12-dsb_ss_report_final.pdf; Internet; accessed 14 November 2005.

¹⁷ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat; A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, (New York, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005), 82.

¹⁸ Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept, 7.

¹⁹ The White House, National Security Presidential Directive 44; Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization, 7 December 2005. Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44.html> ; Internet; accessed 29 December 2005.

²⁰ NSPD-44

²¹ NSPD-44

²² NSPD-44

²³ NSPD-44

²⁴ The White House, National Security Presidential Directive 1; Organization of the National Security Council System, 13 February 2001. After a thorough review of this document, I could not determine any mechanism outlined in the Directive that would shed sufficient light to clarify how lead and supporting relationships for stability and reconstruction operations would be determined by the NSC.

²⁵ NSPD-44

²⁶ NSPD-44

²⁷ Department of Defense, Directive number 3000.05; Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations, November, 28, 2005. Available from http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/d300005_112805/d300005p.pdf accessed 3 January 2006.

²⁸ DOD Directive 3000.05.

²⁹ James Fallows, Blind Into Baghdad, *The Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2004: 27.

³⁰ DOD Directive 3000.05

³¹ DOD Directive 3000.05

³² DOD Directive 3000.05

³³ Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on *Institutionalizing Stability Operations within DoD*, September 2005. Available from http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2005-09-stability_final.pdf. ; Internet, accessed 30 December 2005.

³⁴ Joseph R. Nunez, "Canada's Global Role: A Strategic Assessment of its Military Power", *Parameters* 34, (Autumn 2004): 82.

³⁵ Play to Win.

³⁶ I base my recommendations on my personal experience as a task force commander given the mission to conduct counterinsurgency operations to secure and stabilize the Zabol Province of Afghanistan. While many of the studies I reviewed recommended the interagency

process be implemented at the BCT level, and below as required, these recommendations did not address the problem in the detail required to implement a meaningful solution.

³⁷ Ray Salvatore Jennings , *The Road Ahead: Lessons in Nation Building from Japan, Germany, and Afghanistan for Postwar Iraq*, United States Institute of Peace, 26. Available from <http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pwks49.pdf> ; Internet, accessed 20 December 2005

³⁸ Michael J. Dziedic and Colonel Michael K. Seidl, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams; Military Relations with International and Nongovernmental Organizations in Afghanistan*, United States Institute of Peace, August 2005. Available from <http://www.usip.org./pubs/specialreports/sr147.html>. Accessed 7 January 2006.

³⁹ Dziedic and Seidl.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of Defense *Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operation Planning*, Revision Third Draft (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 August 2005), IV-35.

⁴¹ Based on personal experience in Afghanistan

⁴² Dziedic and Seidl, 11.

⁴³ Ibid

